

VZCZCXRO3735
PP RUEHBC RUEHDE RUEHIHL RUEHKUK RUEHMOS
DE RUEHGB #1837/01 1520005
ZNY CCCCC ZZH
P 010005Z JUN 06
FM AMEMBASSY BAGHDAD
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 4816
INFO RUCNRAQ/IRAQ COLLECTIVE PRIORITY
RUEHIHL/REO HILLAH PRIORITY 2099
RUEHBC/REO BASRAH PRIORITY 2132
RUEHKUK/REO KIRKUK PRIORITY 2100
RUEHMOS/REO MOSUL PRIORITY 2104
RHMFISS/CDR USCENCOM MACDILL AFB FL PRIORITY
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC PRIORITY
RHEHNSC/WHITE HOUSE NSC WASHDC PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 BAGHDAD 001837

SIPDIS

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 05/30/2016

TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [PHUM](#) [PINR](#) [IZ](#)

SUBJECT: PRT VISITS JUVENILE DETENTION FACILITY IN BAGHDAD

BAGHDAD 00001837 001.2 OF 002

Classified By: PRT Baghdad Acting Deputy Team Leader LTC Mark Haney for reasons 1.4(b) and (d).

11. (C) SUMMARY: PRT staff visited a large Iraqi juvenile detention facility in central Baghdad on 22 May. The site visit revealed overcrowding, poor health and environmental conditions, as well as signs of possible abuse. Conversation with the deputy warden indicates that the site is also having difficulties obtaining needed resources from the national government. End Summary.

12. (C) On 22 May, PRT staff toured the Karkh Juvenile Detention facility, run by the Ministry of Labor and Social Services. There, representatives met with the deputy warden of the facility, Abu Oscar (full name unknown). Abu Oscar displayed a willingness to work with the PRT. He raised the need for education for juvenile detainees, and the facility's former status as an adult detention center for pre-trial confinement by the Iraqi police. Abu Oscar claimed that the new facility built by the Coalition for juvenile detainees is currently occupied by approximately 800 displaced families. (Note: PRT Baghdad has not yet ascertained the status of this facility.)

13. (C) The Karkh facility houses approximately 150 to 180 juveniles, including children (9-15 years old), teenagers (15-18), and young adults (18-21), each of whom is held in a different section of the facility. Although the facility is called a 'detention' facility, the residents have all been convicted of crimes and are now serving sentences. Crimes for which juveniles have been convicted range from providing intelligence to terrorist or insurgent groups in the case of one nine year-old girl, to illegally selling music on the street in the case of another. PRT representatives were told that there are four juveniles who have completed their sentences, but cannot leave because they have not paid their restitution debt or cannot travel back to their homes due to security concerns. Also, there is a requirement that a family member escort the juveniles from the facility, which is not always possible for those being held.

14. (C) Conditions are crowded with little living space for the juveniles. PRT representatives saw no playground equipment or other facilities that could be used for recreation or physical exercise. The facility offers very basic education. According to Abu Oscar, approximately 80% of the juveniles can read and write. There are eight teachers who work at the facility; three report directly to the Ministry of Education and five work directly for the

facility. The in-house education program also teaches vocational skills, basic electricity, small appliance repair, ceramics, and arts and crafts.

15. (C) The deputy warden addressed two major concerns, the lack of power and funding. The facility has a basic generator that powers the air-conditioning, but no staff member is trained to provide basic maintenance, and there is no funding to buy repair parts when the generator breaks down. As a result, the juveniles exist, for the most part, without cooling. In order to get supplies to maintain and run the facility, the warden must submit a request to the Minister of Labor and Social Services, and that ministry then decides whether or not the item is needed. As a result, the warden does not always get what he believes he needs for the juveniles.

16. (C) The facility's conditions are very primitive, and basic human needs are not consistently met. There are major health concerns, including a scabies outbreak and over-flowing sewage from an backed-up latrine. It is impossible for the facility to maintain any sense of cleanliness -- there are no cleaning materials such as soap, disinfectants, or other cleaning items available. The juveniles cannot practice basic hygiene because there are dirty, limited shower facilities and no real means for them to care for themselves. At night there is no lighting. There is a limited, one bed medical station which does not appear adequate for the number of juveniles and the nature of their health concerns.

17. (C) PRT representatives also found disturbing signs of possible physical abuse. One boy had welts over his stomach and another had a noticeable black eye. (Comment: In earlier interviews with MOI judicial investigators, PRT has heard that juveniles at this facility regularly experience abuse at

BAGHDAD 00001837 002.2 OF 002

the hands of the guards.)

18. (C) COMMENT: The conditions at the Karkh facility, though not necessarily unique, warrant attention, in part because of the facility's status outside of much of the Iraq's complex detention system. Questions also remain about the fate of the younger juveniles, many of whom appear unable to leave the facility at the conclusion of their sentences - a problem which seems destined to grow in the future without changes in procedure.

KHALILZAD